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Integrating non-discrimination and equality into the post-2015 development agenda for water, sanitation and hygiene

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, Catarina de Albuquerque, in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 16/2.

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Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation

Summary

The Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, Catarina de Albuquerque, submits the present report to the General Assembly in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 16/2. In the report, the Special Rapporteur argues for a post-2015 development agenda that integrates equality and non-discrimination, paired with equity. The report emphasizes the importance of proposing goals, targets and indicators that effectively encompass these dimensions. The human right to water and sanitation serves as an exemplary illustration of the importance of these human rights principles. The inclusion of equality and non-discrimination considerations in the design and implementation of policies and programmes benefits the most marginalized members of society and those most discriminated against. They also contribute to the reduction of gaps in access to fundamental services around the world. Additionally, the Special Rapporteur underlines the need to ensure that water, sanitation and hygiene are considered on equal footing with other priorities, by devoting a specific goal to these areas for the post-2015 framework.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted to the General Assembly by the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, Catarina de Albuquerque, in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 16/2, in which the Council encouraged her to report annually to the General Assembly.

2. In her report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session (A/65/254), the Special Rapporteur provided an analysis on how the human right to water and sanitation can enable a comprehensive and sustainable achievement of target 7.C of the Millennium Development Goals. This target was set to halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. The report examined how human rights can address a number of blind spots of the Millennium Development Goals, notably their silence regarding non-discrimination and equality. It offered recommendations on how a human rights framework can bring specific attention to the most marginalized and disadvantaged groups, ensure universal access, promote intersectoral approaches and strengthen participation and accountability.

3. The discussion on the post-2015 development agenda presents an unprecedented opportunity to take this critical analysis a step further and to provide concrete recommendations for the future development framework. In the present report, the Special Rapporteur argues that this agenda cannot advance without integrating equality and non-discrimination. The current report emphasizes the importance of proposing goals, targets and indicators that explicitly encompass these dimensions, based on the human rights framework which entails legally binding obligations for all States Members of the United Nations. The Special Rapporteur is of the view that the human right to water and sanitation serves as an exemplary illustration of the importance of these principles in any future human development agenda.

4. Furthermore, she argues that the human right to water and sanitation should be integrated in the goals, targets, indicators and monitoring mechanisms for the post-2015 development framework. She calls for a development agenda that purposely aims at reducing gaps between the "haves" and "have-nots", while also focusing on the most economically and socially deprived and marginalized members of society.

5. The world has changed significantly since the formulation of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000. The global crises in food, finance, economy and the environment have generated considerable concern within development circles. Climate change has an enormous impact on environmental sustainability and the lives of billions,[1] and in combination with population growth, ageing and increased urbanization, places particular stress on current and future access to water and sanitation. In fact, the growth of global water demand is already outpacing population growth.

6. Growing inequalities across and within regions and countries are increasingly signalled to counter some of the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals. Some States have become more aware of the high social cost of inequalities, resulting in disillusionment — in particular among youth — instability and violence.

[1] See Tony Addison and others, "The triple crisis and the global aid architecture", *African Development Review*, vol. 23, No. 4 (December 2011).

Inequalities hinder efforts for poverty reduction and economic growth,[2] negatively affecting society as a whole.[3] In fact, the World Economic Forum cited inequality as one of the top global risks.[4] For major international actors and agencies, including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equity and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), addressing inequalities is vital.

7. Just as the state of the world has changed in the last decade, it has also brought about some evolution in the human rights agenda, enhancing the tools to address growing concerns about inequality in the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights. While the right to water and sanitation has always been a component of the right to an adequate standard of living as contained in several international human rights instruments, its explicit recognition in 2010 created an enormous momentum in the sector, galvanizing international support around providing resources, building capacities, and scaling up efforts to provide water and sanitation for all (see General Assembly resolution 64/292 and Human Rights Council resolution 15/9).

8. In 2011, the Human Rights Council urged States and other development partners to adopt an approach based on the right to safe drinking water and sanitation when designing and implementing future development programmes (A/HRC/RES/18/1, para. 9). Similarly, the recent United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) reaffirmed the commitments of Governments regarding the human right to water and sanitation, to be progressively realized for the population.[5] More generally, a deeper understanding of economic, social and cultural rights in the past decade, coupled with further articulated guidance about the role of non-discrimination in the realization of these rights[6] has allowed for a more discernible human rights framework around these issues. These evolutions must permeate a post-2015 global development agenda.

9. The present report is informed by the Special Rapporteur's work during the past four years in direct contact with a wide range of stakeholders, including national and local authorities, international actors, civil society organizations and in particular with children, women and men of all ages whose access to water and sanitation is often denied by direct or indirect forms of discrimination. In all her country missions, the Special Rapporteur has become acutely aware of the structural causes of lack of access to water and sanitation, many of which are rooted in unequal enjoyment of human rights by specific individuals and communities.

10. The Special Rapporteur has benefited from her involvement in the process led by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF, known as the Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation, which is officially charged with monitoring progress on the water and sanitation target. As 2015 draws closer, the Joint Monitoring Programme has started to discuss options for post-2015

[2] Claire Melamed, "Putting inequality in the post-2015 picture", Overseas Development Institute (March 2012), p. 4.

[3] United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda, Thematic Think Piece, "Addressing inequalities: the heart of the post-2015 agenda and the future we want for all" (May 2012), p. 6.

[4] World Economic Forum, *Global Risks Report 2012*, Seventh Edition (Geneva, 2012), p. 19.

[5] Outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio de Janeiro, 20-22 June 2012 (General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex), para. 121.

[6] General comment No. 20 (2009) on non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights.

monitoring. In this context, there is a shared understanding among engineers, statisticians, economists and human rights lawyers that the Millennium Development Goals did not put sufficient pressure on Governments to ensure their efforts are reaching the poorest and most marginalized populations.[7]

11. The Joint Monitoring Programme has created four working groups that are examining water, sanitation, hygiene and equity[8] and non-discrimination, respectively. The Special Rapporteur serves as Chair of the Working Group on Equity and Non-Discrimination, and has participated in the discussions in the other three working groups. Their role is to advise decision makers on potential goals, targets and indicators for the post-2015 development agenda and to assess the technical feasibility of monitoring. The Working Group on Equity and Non-Discrimination is made up of human rights experts, sector professionals and data specialists, seeking to lay out proposals that meet human rights standards, that are relevant to the sector and that are feasible from the perspective of data collection.

12. In the view of the Special Rapporteur, the findings and recommendations of the Working Group on Equity and Non-Discrimination at its May 2012 meeting bring a valuable and much-needed multisectoral expertise to this global discussion. However, she wishes to note that the present report reflects only her own position and understanding of how to integrate equality and non-discrimination into the future framework as a whole. In her opinion, these findings can also be used for discussion of the post-2015 agenda for other sectors, including health, education and access to other essential services.

13. The report is organized in three main sections. It starts by exploring the importance of global monitoring and human rights in order to effectively address discrimination and inequality. It situates these questions in the broader discussion on how non-discrimination and equality should be integrated in future goals, targets and indicators across the board and also specifically in relation to water, sanitation and hygiene as a priority development area no longer to be subsumed under other sectors. It discusses proposals for monitoring non-discrimination and equality, inter alia, specifically for marginalized groups, addressing geographic inequalities, individual and group inequalities relevant to every country in the world, and for intrahousehold access to water and sanitation services before ending with a set of conclusions and recommendations.

II. Development, global monitoring and human rights

A. The need for global monitoring

14. In September 2000, world leaders adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration, making an unprecedented commitment to eradicate global poverty (see General Assembly resolution 55/2). This high-level political commitment and the subsequent focus on a set of measurable, time-bound Goals created a common framework for assessing progress among countries by 2015. The Millennium

[7] See WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation, Report of the first Consultation on Post-2015 Monitoring of Drinking-Water and Sanitation, Berlin, 3-5 May 2011.

[8] See sect. III of the present report for a definition of equality and equity.

Development Goals placed key issues on the agenda that might have otherwise been neglected. As a result, most Governments, development banks and donors have attempted to deliver on what was agreed upon to measure: a limited number of priority areas for development. These areas have become the top priorities for national and international policymaking, budget allocations, and the targeting of development assistance. The seemingly aloof international framework has had a direct and concrete impact on people's lives, their health and well-being.

15. The Millennium Development Goals were never intended as national goals; however, they have often been translated as such. Their impact on national policymaking and monitoring is undeniable. Monitoring at the national and global levels has distinct purposes, ideally complementary ones. While national-level monitoring serves for national policymaking, planning and financing, global monitoring speaks to the interest of the international community to determine whether progress on international agreed goals has been reached. It is more focused on identifying broad trends and recurrent themes across the globe — serving to put certain issues on the agenda and providing a platform for advocacy. Global monitoring also adds the element of comparability, hence setting incentives for States to make the same or better progress as neighbouring countries or States in a similar position. Despite these distinct monitoring purposes, the impact of the global framework in influencing national priorities cannot be underestimated. Issues that do not receive attention at the global level also tend to be disregarded in national policymaking.

16. Inequalities are present in every country across the globe, yet, they manifest themselves differently across regions and within countries. Some types of discrimination, such as those based on gender, age or disability status, are relevant across most, if not all, countries, while others — such as ethnic or related discrimination — can take varied shapes from country to country. Despite these country differences, inequalities and disparities are structural factors with direct impact in development, hence they cannot be left out from a global framework. While the specific groups may vary, patterns of marginalization, exclusion and discrimination are consistent across the world. Showing these patterns and trends across the world through global monitoring conveys a very powerful message and provides a tool to draw attention to the situation of the most disadvantaged and marginalized, helping to target efforts towards them.

B. The power of data: delivering on what is measured

17. The target on water and sanitation, for example, has encouraged Governments to allocate resources towards improving access to water. In recent years, there is more attention to access to sanitation, in part owing to its notorious status as one of the "most off track" of the targets. Monitoring of issues such as open defecation has moved policymakers to recognize significant issues relating to dignity, health and human rights. Some Governments have initiated campaigns to eradicate open defecation practices. As such, in her country missions, the Special Rapporteur has observed that the monitoring of access to water and sanitation services has provided decisive information to encourage and convince Governments, policymakers and donors to revisit their policies and to engage more effectively with the water and sanitation sector, in order to ensure the provision of services.

18. However, the downside of delivering on what is measured is that there are fewer incentives to work on the areas which are not required for reporting purposes. As the Millennium Development Goals provide no comprehensive framework for development and remain blind to other critical human rights issues, significant issues are sidelined. Many targets focus on achieving a certain increase or decrease — such as halving the population without access to water and sanitation — with little incentive for Governments to go beyond that target.

19. Other significant omissions remain unmonitored. Water quality is one of them. While the target calls for access to "safe" water, the accompanying indicator uses a proxy ("improved") that fails to capture the safety dimension adequately. Hence, States report on having met the water target even when in reality they are supplying water that is unsafe to drink and that may cause disease and possibly death. The same holds true for the management of excreta and wastewater that is not monitored, allowing pollution to continue unabated and further contaminating water. Finally, the focus on aggregate outcomes provides no particular incentive to reach marginalized groups. During her missions, the Special Rapporteur is often faced with incomprehension by policymakers in countries that are "on track" regarding the water target, when she comments on the lack of access by slum dwellers or people in rural areas, or the lack of quality of tap water. The target may be achieved but access to water and sanitation as guaranteed by human rights remains unequally enjoyed by many.

20. The realization of human rights, including the human right to water and sanitation, is a concern for every single country in the world. The post-2015 agenda should reflect this by adopting a universal perspective that applies to all countries. The focus on achieving equality is relevant for any country in the world, including developed countries, where a relatively small number of people are left behind and aggregate targets may not capture the progress needed to reduce the number of people without access, making efforts seem meaningless.

21. There is no doubt that future goals, targets and indicators in the post-2015 development framework will influence fundamental decisions on legislation, policymaking and budgeting in the coming decades. The compromises made in the development of the Millennium Development Goals, such as the failure to address water safety, must not be repeated. The new framework must be comprehensive and must ensure that Governments address the most pertinent issues and target the populations most in need. For the next set of goals, it is not enough to attempt to resolve tensions by disregarding development challenges simply because they do not fit into certain definable categories or reshaping them to fit with comfortable limits of knowledge. The way forward requires a leap towards changing the status quo to improve the lives of those most affected by these policies.

22. While many caution that future targets and indicators need to be measurable, and this is certainly true, there is also a tendency to hide behind this technical argument. Others have noted that measurability is an inappropriate standard for political decisions on deprioritizing certain issues, and that data should "be seen as a servant, rather than a master".[9] The current lack of data should not be used as an argument against future monitoring. Rather, the Special Rapporteur calls for data to be collected on certain issues precisely to bring them to light. The current lack of

[9] United Nations System Task Team, "Addressing inequalities", p. 13 (see footnote 3 above).

data on certain issues is not accidental. Neglect often coincides with a low political profile. For example, in many countries, people living in informal settlements do not appear in the official statistics, even when they represent a high percentage of the population in major cities. In that regard, the Special Rapporteur calls for pushing the boundaries of what is currently perceived as measurable. A commitment to better and more accurate data collection as part of the global framework is essential to identifying and monitoring inequalities, a crucial step to making progress to end them.

23. As a final word on measures and monitoring, it must be noted that there are significant differences between the aim and purpose of indicators for human rights monitoring and indicators to be used in monitoring outcomes in the context of global development goals. In recent years there has been a greater effort to explore the use of indicators as human rights monitoring tools. Human rights monitoring indicators are designed to closely relate to specific legal norms. As such, they must reflect and effectively measure all elements of a right, including integration of cross-cutting human rights norms such as participation and accountability. Such indicators should be flexible enough to be contextually relevant. On the other hand, the call to integrate human rights elements into the post-2015 framework seeks to make monitoring these development goals rights-sensitive rather than transforming them into human rights monitoring tools.

C. Water, sanitation and hygiene in the global development framework

24. Under the current structure, the target for water and sanitation comes under the broader environmental goal, which also includes protection of natural resources, reduction of biodiversity loss and improvement of the lives of slum dwellers. The post-2015 development agenda should dedicate a stand-alone goal to water, sanitation and hygiene, considering that access to these services plays a central role in social and economic development.

25. The lack of access to water, sanitation and hygiene has not only an environmental impact but also social and individual dimensions. From a human rights perspective, water and sanitation, just like food, are parts of the same fundamental right to an adequate standard of living. Their similarities with other sectors such as education and health warrant attention alongside goals in these areas to ensure visibility and prioritization. Member States should take a consistent approach to their commitment in the Rio+20 outcome document, in which water and sanitation were set as one of the priority areas for sustainable development (see General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex, para. 119).

26. The normative content of the right to water and sanitation defined in terms of availability, quality, acceptability, accessibility and affordability points to essential features to be considered in the definition of indicators and targets. The misalignment of the current framework, such as for instance, the omission of whether water sources counting towards the achievement of the target are of good quality, has shown that the Millennium Development Goals can greatly benefit from better and more sustainable impacts if human rights are mainstreamed.

27. Access to water and sanitation is not only a human rights entitlement but it also has an enormous impact on human health: it is central to the reduction of child mortality, malnutrition, neglected tropical diseases, opportunistic diseases for people living with HIV/AIDS, and a number of other health conditions. It contributes to

ensuring gender equality, inter alia, by reducing the time spent by girls and women in collecting and managing household water. As such, access to water and sanitation also impacts on education, both through freeing children's time to attend school and through improving health. Moreover, improving access to water and sanitation reduces the burden of inadequate menstrual hygiene management.

28. In purely economic terms, it makes sense to stress the importance of access to water, and particularly to sanitation. According to a recent report, there is a global economic return of $5.50 for every dollar spent on sanitation, and $2 for every dollar spent on water, with total economic benefits of $60 billion annually for meeting the relevant target of the Millennium Development Goals. The corresponding economic loss owing to the inadequate delivery of water and sanitation amounted to 1.5 per cent of gross domestic product of the countries included in the study.[10]

III. Integrating equality and non-discrimination in the post-2015 framework

29. Non-discrimination, equality and equity must be understood before discussing their integration into goals, targets and indicators:

- **Non-discrimination.** Non-discrimination is one of the pillars of international human rights law and a central feature of all treaties. Discrimination is defined as any distinction, exclusion or restriction which has the purpose or the effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.[11] In terms of monitoring, this principle requires States to look beyond average attainments and to disaggregate datasets in order to allow for identification of disparate impacts or less favourable treatment over time.

- **Equality.** Equality before the law and equal protection of the law without any discrimination, constitute a basic and general principle relating to the protection of human rights, and to their enjoyment. It requires a focus on all groups experiencing direct or indirect discrimination. Substantive equality requires the adoption of affirmative action or temporary special measures where barriers exist and persist, and which lead to denial of rights to individuals and groups. However, it must be emphasized that equal does not mean the same. Equality does not imply treating what is unequal equally; under human rights law, there is a necessary distinction, as equality does not indicate identical treatment in all cases. While universality is about ensuring access for all — even the hardest to reach — equality is about "levelling up" or progressively working to improve the quality and levels of service for groups that lag behind. In relation to water, sanitation and hygiene, equality presumes, for example, gradual improvements to close gaps in unequal

[10] WHO, "Global costs and benefits of drinking-water supply and sanitation interventions to reach the Millennium Development Goal target and universal coverage" (Geneva, 2012), pp. 4-5.

[11] See, for example, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, art. 1.1; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, art. 1; the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, art. 2.

coverage rates. Human rights law requires equal access to basic services, but this does not mean that everyone benefits from the same technical solutions or the same type of service, such as flush toilets.

- **Equity.** Equity is the moral imperative to dismantle unjust differences based on principles of fairness and justice. In the water, sanitation and hygiene context, equity, like equality, requires a focus on the most disadvantaged and the poorest. Many organizations in the sector, including the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, WaterAid, WHO and UNICEF, have made equity a central part of their agenda. However, from a human rights perspective, relying on equity carries certain risks because its definition is a malleable concept that is not legally binding. While equity may denote justice, it may dilute rights claims if considered separately from equality and non-discrimination.

30. Embracing the human rights principles of non-discrimination and equality as well as the equity approach must be central to any post-2015 framework, as it provides the necessary political foothold to prioritize a State's legal obligation to combat discrimination while also underscoring areas where human rights law has been traditionally less robust, particularly in relation to income disparities. Sustainable development for all is unattainable without political commitment to advancing these human rights principles.

A. Remedying inequality as the most significant blind spot in the Millennium Development Goals

31. Foremost in the post-2015 framework debate is the fact that the Millennium Development Goals are silent on discrimination, inequalities and unjustifiable disparities. At least in theory, many of the targets can be achieved without benefiting a single person with a disability, a single person belonging to an ethnic minority, or a single person living in poverty because their focus on average attainments creates a blind spot in the achievement of equality. In practice, the Special Rapporteur has consistently witnessed this reality and she is not alone in her observations. UNICEF has taken a lead role by placing equity at the centre of its development agenda, recognizing that reaching the poorest and most marginalized communities within countries is pivotal to the realization of the Goals.[12] Likewise, UN-Women has also cautioned that, with the target date of 2015 in sight, it is increasingly clear that progress towards meeting many of the Goals is off track. Inequality, including gender inequality, is holding back progress.[13]

32. In her country missions, the Special Rapporteur has noted that specific groups are excluded from access to water and sanitation, often reflecting patterns of discrimination, marginalization and limited political will to ensure substantive equality. These groups can be identified along ethnicity and socioeconomic divides.[14] In some countries, indigenous peoples living on reserves do not have

[12] UNICEF, *Progress for Children: Achieving the MDGs with Equity* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.10.XX.5).

[13] UN-Women, *Progress of the World's Women 2011-2012: in Pursuit of Justice*, available from http://progress.unwomen.org/pdfs/EN-Report-Progress.pdf.

[14] See, for example, mission to the United States of America (A/HRC/18/33/Add.4), para. 79.

access to water or sanitation services.[15] Dalits often suffer discrimination in accessing water and sanitation,[16] while Roma are most disadvantaged in many European countries.[17] Moreover, the Special Rapporteur's attention has repeatedly been drawn to vast gender inequalities and multiple discrimination, or the compounded impact of various grounds of discrimination on the same individual or group. For instance, women and girls are overwhelmingly tasked with collecting water and are physically and sexually threatened when they fetch water.[18] Persons with disabilities are also disproportionately represented among those who lack access to safe drinking water and sanitation.[19]

33. The United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 Development Agenda has noted that, in developing countries, access to water and sanitation, among others, are much worse for low-income and rural families. Despite progress in poverty reduction in the overall picture, the report argues, major inequalities persist.[20]

34. It then put forward equality as one of the fundamental principles providing the foundation for the post-2015 agenda, alongside human rights and sustainability.[21] Unless action is taken to deliberately address the discrimination and inequalities that particular groups face, the post-2015 goals will likely fail to address the underlying truth behind the figures: Millennium Development Goal indicators are consistently worse for discriminated groups in every region.[22]

35. Often, inequalities intersect and their effects accumulate over time. Without an explicit focus on multiple discrimination, these effects can continue unabated and stifle progress. Social, cultural, economic and political inequalities all have reinforcing effects that perpetuate social exclusion. Hence, a focus on intersectional inequalities is indispensable.[23] In fact, the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights speaks to this crucial point in paragraph 17 of its General comment No. 20, stating that "cumulative discrimination has a unique and specific impact on individuals and merits particular consideration and remedying".

36. Being disadvantaged relates to different factors such as ethnicity, language, religion, caste, gender, age, disability, nationality, and others. While the focus of the equity discourse is often on people living in poverty, it must not be forgotten that the world's poorest are not randomly distributed — they disproportionately share one or several of the factors that commonly lead to exclusion and discrimination.

37. In order to properly assess progress in reducing inequalities, monitoring must go beyond inequities in income because focusing on income disparities does not address the root causes of exclusion and lack of access to social development, including water and sanitation. Examining these other factors explains why people

[15] See, for example, mission to Costa Rica (A/HRC/12/24/Add.1), para. 48.

[16] See, for example, mission to Bangladesh (A/HRC/15/55), para. 25.

[17] See, for example, mission to Slovenia (A/HRC/18/33/Add.2), para. 33.

[18] See, for example, mission to Egypt (A/HRC/15/31/Add.3 and Add.1), para. 22.

[19] See, for example, mission to Bangladesh (A/HRC/15/55), para. 21.

[20] United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, "Realizing the future we want for all: report to the Secretary-General" (New York, 2012), para. 32.

[21] Ibid., para. 53.

[22] Melamed, "Putting inequality", p. 4 (see footnote 2 above).

[23] Dolf te Lintelo, "Summary: inequality and social justice roundtable consultation", MDG Achievement Fund and Institute of Development Studies (2011), p. 3.

lack access and helps to design appropriate policy responses. A person with a disability and a person of an ethnic minority might be both poor and lacking access to water and/or sanitation — but the reasons for their lack of access differ, and the necessary policy response to guarantee them access are also distinct. Sometimes, the barrier preventing certain groups from having access is not a lack of financial resources, but rather the existence of laws, policies or cumbersome administrative procedures that lead to their exclusion. Moreover, without targeting the most marginalized, they will continue to be excluded even when efforts target the poorest of the poor.

38. Against this background, in the Special Rapporteur's view, there is a need to redefine progress within the context of development — it must not be called progress when significant parts of the population are left behind. The future development agenda must include measures to determine how progress is distributed and who is excluded, and to set incentives to reduce inequalities and focus on the most disadvantaged.

B. The way forward: integrating equality and non-discrimination into goals, targets and indicators

39. The Special Rapporteur is of the view that a forward-looking post-2015 development agenda must be ambitious. It must tackle disparities and emphasize non-discrimination and equality as core principles. This view is shared increasingly by States, United Nations entities, development actors and civil society organizations. This comes from practical evidence found on the ground. Appallingly, much of the progress made since 2000 has left the most marginalized in a similar situation. Indeed, many agree that the current set of Millennium Development Goals, which focus on average progress, has masked the inequalities that lie behind these averages, thus requiring a new method of measuring progress. According to the United Nations Development Group, inequalities have been identified as one of only nine major areas for consultation at the global level. This sentiment is widely shared by those working in the water and sanitation sectors, agreeing that "concerns of non-discrimination and equity related to fulfilling the right to access water and sanitation should be reflected in future indicators".[24]

40. Undeniably, one of the strengths of the Millennium Development Goals is their format, with concrete and easy-to-communicate goals, quantitative and time-bound targets and measurable indicators providing a clear framework for global scrutiny. Hence, many stakeholders are arguing to retain this format.[25] This should be combined with developing better tools and methodologies for measuring the underlying inequalities that are otherwise hidden by current methods.

41. Already in 2010, States committed to improved systems for monitoring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals so as to allow for the collection of disaggregated data to capture inequalities by recognizing: "all countries require adequate, timely, reliable and disaggregated data, including

[24] WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme on Water Supply and Sanitation, Report of the first Consultation, p. 3 (see footnote 7 above).

[25] United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (2012), "Realizing the future", para. 24 (see footnote 20 above).

demographic data, in order to design better programmes and policies for sustainable development" (see General Assembly resolution 65/1, para. 68).

42. The current development framework already calls for the disaggregation of data according to different stratifiers, such as sex, to the greatest extent possible.[26] Experience has shown, though, that such calls are not sufficient by themselves — they need to be linked to goals and targets that offer an incentive for progress in reducing inequalities. At the technical level, the challenge of capturing the distributional dimensions of inequality is exacerbated by data constraints that make it difficult to track them. However, with the necessary political commitment, these challenges can be overcome, as will be further outlined below in the examination of some proposals to address inequalities in access to water, sanitation and hygiene.

43. By itself, disaggregation does not automatically result in the reduction of inequalities. It provides a tool for the collection of more detailed and accurate data, but policymakers need to act on the information it reveals. As difficult as it may be to track inequality given certain data constraints, the real challenge lies at the political level, because the way in which development, poverty and their inherent inequalities are measured has tremendous influence on the direction of policies, the allocation of resources and ultimately, the effectiveness of responses. Therefore, the aim of reducing inequalities must not only be captured at the level of indicators and disaggregation of data, but must be reflected in specific goals and targets against which progress can be measured.

44. The post-2015 framework must be explicitly designed to reveal who remains invisible, where efforts have failed, and how development continues to exclude entire population groups. Based on these findings, goals, targets and indicators must be framed in a way to reduce inequalities and target the most disadvantaged. They must not continue to focus solely on aggregate outcomes. The inherent difficulty of this process should not detract from the fact that it is a legal and moral imperative. The inclusion of goals, targets and indicators that focus on the reduction of inequality within the post-2015 framework will help to draw attention to the groups and individuals most in need, trigger the creation of more precise data and adjust development aims to better respond to the reality on the ground.

45. In response to the concern about averages hiding inequalities, some have proposed that future targets be made universal, so that no group can be left behind.[27] Under this option, the goal could not be considered achieved unless everyone is reached. However, setting universal access as the goal — as laudable and necessary as it is — does not by itself guarantee equal access and is insufficient to ensure priority for the most disadvantaged. Universal access at a specified target date can continue to bring focus on aggregate outcomes without setting incentives to reduce uncovered inequalities through targeting or prioritizing the most disadvantaged. To the contrary, specifying that a goal be "universal" alone may result in incentives for States to continue to prioritize the relatively well-off and easy-to-reach in order to demonstrate rapid progress towards the goal of universal access. Under that scenario, the most disadvantaged would often be the last to be

[26] See the official list of Millennium Development Goals indicators, available from http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=indicators/officiallist.htm.

[27] See, for example, John McArthur, "Getting to zero: finishing the job the Millennium Development Goals started", Global Agenda Council on Benchmarking Progress (2012).

reached.[28] The future goals and targets should therefore explicitly embrace equality alongside universality. While universality is about ensuring access for all, equality is about "levelling up" or working towards improving the quality and levels of service of groups that lag behind.

46. Equality is relevant to all fields of development and must be applied to all future goals and targets, including those concerning water, sanitation and hygiene. Integrating non-discrimination and equality into all future goals and targets requires including incentives to reduce inequalities. However, to underscore the intrinsic value of equality as an overriding objective, it should also be a stand-alone goal.[29] Having a stand-alone goal on the reduction of inequality is essential to bring it to light and to give it a centre stage in the development agenda. While some argue that a separate equality goal will lead to an insular treatment of equality,[30] the Special Rapporteur is of the opposite view: including equality as an overarching, cross-cutting concern at the goal level will ensure that the reduction of inequalities will be addressed under all the substantive targets, while she acknowledges that this will depend on the way the goal is crafted.

47. Among the ideas for a dedicated goal on equality, one of the most cited proposals is to have a target for income inequality by using the Gini coefficient.[31] A target could either relate to a specific level of income equality or it could call for a reduction in the Gini coefficient until it fell below a certain value.[32]

48. The conventional discourse describes poverty as multidimensional, yet its quantification has remained largely one-dimensional, focused on income, making it incapable of reflecting reality. Future targets should reflect the reality that poverty is often the result of multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination. Income inequality is not always the best proxy for measuring overall inequality. Other metrics of inequality may capture existing processes of discrimination and resulting inequalities better and more in line with human rights considerations.

49. In fact, the current Millennium Development Goal on gender equality represents already an attempt at formulating a stand-alone goal on one particular area of equality that is of paramount importance across the world. The accompanying target has been heavily criticized for limiting gender equality to education, which is again somewhat broadened by the indicators that also measure the share of women in wage employment and the proportion of seats in national parliaments.[33] Still, the gaps between the goal and its accompanying targets and indicators related to the overall measure of gender equality highlight the difficulty of reducing a goal on equality to a limited number of quantifiers that can capture the

[28] United Nations System Task Team, "Addressing inequalities", p. 12 (see footnote 3 above).

[29] *The United Nations Development Strategy Beyond 2015* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.12.II.A.3), p. 18.

[30] Jan Vandemoortele, background paper prepared for the Experts Group Meeting to support the advancement of the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda, New York, 27-29 February 2012, sect. 7.8.

[31] A country's Gini coefficient is between 0 and 100, with 0 indicating perfect income equality and 100 indicating absolute income inequality, meaning that a single person would have all the income.

[32] Melamed, "Putting inequality", p. 4 (see footnote 2 above).

[33] *Claiming the Millennium Development Goals: a Human Rights Approach* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XIV.6), p. 26.

different forms and manifestations of inequalities in any meaningful and comprehensive way.

50. The challenge is to set such an overall goal on equality that does justice to its cross-cutting nature, relevance to all fields of development and different grounds and manifestations of inequalities. To address these challenges, the future development agenda could include an overall goal on achieving equality accompanied by targets for different sectors for reducing inequalities. Since it might not be necessary, feasible or advisable to relate all targets to all different grounds of discrimination, the pertaining indicators could focus on the dominant inequalities as relevant for different sectors relating to sex, disability, age, income/wealth, ethnicity, and geographic location, among other stratifiers.[34] The overall framework would have to ensure that all different types of inequalities are captured. Optionally, if indicators with ordinal values were selected, the different sectoral indicators could be combined for a composite score that would yield an overall measure of equality.

IV. Goals, targets and indicators for water, sanitation and hygiene

51. One of the challenges for the post-2015 development agenda will be to improve the analysis of the different forms of discrimination in access to water and sanitation and to design an appropriate methodology to monitor them. In this context, the Special Rapporteur highlights some manifestations of discrimination to assist in the assessment of goals, targets and indicators to successfully monitor non-discrimination. Appreciating that there will be difficult decisions ahead as goals, targets and indicators are narrowed and culled, she suggests some key issues for a future development agenda. These cover a range of different considerations derived from international human rights law as well as general considerations of equity. These issues could also, mutatis mutandis, be applied outside the water, sanitation and hygiene sector — so as to ensure that equity and non-discrimination are also captured in other areas of development.

52. Based on these considerations, this section also puts forward some ideas on how to integrate these in the future development goals, targets and indicators framework. It describes proposals on the methodology needed to gather and analyse the data necessary to support monitoring progress towards these targets. The monitoring system currently used by the Joint Monitoring Programme relies chiefly on household surveys. This data set includes a wide variety of equity and equality-related variables, which are amenable to much more equality analysis than has been performed to date. Other data could be generated relatively easily with slight adaptations of the current data sources and the addition of other sources to complement household surveys. The Special Rapporteur encourages the Joint Monitoring Programme and other monitoring bodies to explore ways to supplement household survey data with additional sources. Some potential additional sources include data from water and sanitation providers (such as data about location of users, fees paid, areas where access is non-existent or minimal), administrative data (e.g., data about service levels, cut-offs and disconnections). Through her discussion with technical experts and data specialists, the Special Rapporteur has learned that these proposals are feasible and that better monitoring of the equality dimension of access to water and sanitation can be achieved with the required political will.

[34] Melamed, "Putting inequality", p. 5 (see footnote 2 above).

A. Focusing on progressive realization while reducing inequalities

53. The omission of progressive realization striving towards universal access in the current framework has allowed States to settle for less-than-universal coverage, to the point of remaining at low levels of service, or ignoring persisting gaps among different segments of society, even when their available resources would allow them to go beyond the Millennium Development Goal commitments. While not intended as end-of-the-road national targets, the Goals have often been interpreted as such, hence missing the opportunity to tailor targets to the national level, beyond the international limits.

54. Human rights law requires States to prioritize basic access for everyone. This must be reflected in future goals, targets and indicators. Progressive realization also means that expeditious and effective steps must be taken and that it is not acceptable for States to aim at universal access at the most basic level only. Instead, continual improvement towards an adequate standard of living must be the aim. However, prioritizing those lacking services and ensuring progressive realization does not by itself address non-discrimination.

55. Among those who are disadvantaged in their access to water and sanitation, there are many who are discriminated against — because they have a disability, because they are girls, or a combination of these and other factors. If this additional dimension is not captured, the ones who are discriminated against will continue to be discriminated against, even among the most disadvantaged in their access to water and sanitation.

56. The Special Rapporteur encourages investigating data analysis techniques that elucidate the impact of intersecting forms of discrimination, since a human rights-based approach requires attention to such intersectionality — the ways in which different forms of inequality overlap and interrelate. For instance, some Governments have made use of data analysis to target subsidies according to income or geographic location, to ensure that they reach the desired households and individuals.[35] Often, place of residences and socioeconomic situation, together with sex and age, can point to multiple discrimination.

B. Address geographical inequalities: rural/urban disparities and slums

57. One of the most pervasive inequities in water and sanitation exists between the urban and rural populations. Global monitoring shows that rural populations persistently have lower levels of access than urban populations, calling for special attention in targets and/or indicators. Geographically removed, remote and marginalized regions are often overlooked in planning. The Special Rapporteur therefore encourages policymakers to keep the disaggregation between rural and urban, as called for in the current monitoring framework, while improving the methodology to capture the special situations of people living in slums.

58. People living in urban slums or informal settlements frequently lack access to adequate water and sanitation. Worldwide, it is estimated that a billion people live in

[35] Catarina Albuquerque and Virginia Roaf, *On the Right Track: Good Practices in Realising the Rights to Water and Sanitation* (Lisbon, 2011), chap. II.

slums, which is about one third of the urban population.[36] There are many causes for their lack of access to services, including deliberate exclusion, in laws and policies, of informal settlements from formal water and sanitation services. This kind of exclusion can lead to increased inequity, as slum dwellers have little choice but to pay exceedingly high prices to informal providers for poor or irregular levels of service.

59. Identifying and defining slums can pose a challenge for monitoring, but significant advances have been made in recent years, including by groups working with slum dweller organizations and through spatial analysis. Assessing slums by their spatial dimension — their location — could both yield more accurate data and serve as an effective link to planning. Indicators should be designed specifically for capturing the difference between slum and non-slum households. In addition, the definition of slums needs improvement; the best approach may be to use country definitions themselves. Those responsible for implementing major household surveys are encouraged to undertake special slum surveys, commit to oversampling in slum areas, and explore the use of data gathered by slum dweller organizations.

60. Emerging data sources and methods that include attention to equity and equality information should be further utilized even though preliminary reviews suggest that these approaches are still at an embryonic stage. The use of new technologies linked to mobile telephones and crowd-sourcing, for example, in relation to slums, can assist to rapidly expand data-gathering and monitoring in a participatory and transparent manner. For example, WaterAid and partners carry out water point mapping with global positioning system techniques to assist local governments to address existing disparities in the allocation of resources for water points and wells in both rural and urban areas, and this has also helped to identify political partisanship.[37]

C. Focus on inequities, shedding light on the poorest of the poor

61. As the Joint Monitoring Programme has demonstrated in recent years, wealth inequality correlates in many countries to inequalities in access to adequate water and sanitation. The rate of progress is very uneven among wealth quintiles in many countries, with the poorest two quintiles frequently experiencing lack of improvement while other quintiles experience significant improvements. In other countries, progress has been impressive among the lower quintiles, and lessons could be drawn from these experiences. Some Governments are reacting to this analysis by reassessing their policies and programming to target resources on those living in poverty. One of the countries visited by the Special Rapporteur earmarked a percentage of the budget for sanitation in rural areas, since these are traditionally poorer than urban ones. In another country, the Government created a revolving fund for access to intradomiciliary water connections in smaller villages, where inhabitants were poor and could not afford to buy the hardware in one instalment.

62. In presenting this wealth-quintile analysis, the Joint Monitoring Programme went beyond the requirement to provide the basic data required to report on the

[36] See WHO and United Nations Human Settlements Programme, *Hidden Cities: Unmasking and Overcoming Health Inequities in Urban Settings* (Geneva, 2010).

[37] See http://www.wateraid.org/uk/what_we_do/how_we_work/wash_matters/10092.asp.

water and sanitation target and presented quantitative data that point to socioeconomic segments of the population experiencing obstacles in accessing water and sanitation. The Special Rapporteur welcomes this initiative and considers such analysis to be very powerful in highlighting the inequities in access to water and sanitation, but also in showing that States are in a position to improve this situation with the necessary political will. The new framework should reflect the need for this analysis at the level of targets. Hence targets should be crafted that specifically address improvements for the lowest quintile or call for reducing the inequalities between the best-off and the worst-off.

D. Address group-related inequalities that vary across countries

63. In many countries, groups experiencing discrimination often face difficulties in accessing water and sanitation services. The water, sanitation and hygiene-related impacts of discrimination are often closely related to income-related impacts, but they are not the same. In fact, the dynamics and systems involved in discrimination against minorities and the impacts of wealth inequities are different. Data can assist in elucidating these differences, helping to catalyse action in relation to the specific problems present in a given context. The data necessary for disaggregation according to different groups are already gathered through standard household surveys used by the Joint Monitoring Programme and could be used much more widely.

64. Pilot analysis carried in the framework of the Working Group on Equity and Non-Discrimination demonstrated that significant disparities exist in water and sanitation access among ethnic, religious, and language minorities in some countries, a finding that emphasizes the need for tailored monitoring of minorities and marginalized groups. For example, in one South Asian country, data show that while open defecation rates for the majority population was 37 per cent, the rate for the minority population was 70 per cent. In another country of that same region, data show that open defecation rates for the population speaking the majority language was 39 per cent, and the rates for minority-speaking populations were significantly higher: between 55 per cent, and 85 per cent among other language speakers. A rights-sensitive analysis uncovers such patterns so that factors leading to these differences can be explored and policy responses can be developed. If the progress of groups that suffer discrimination and marginalization is not specifically monitored, those groups will remain excluded — even among the poorest.

65. Targets and indicators should therefore specifically address the "most disadvantaged groups". As discrimination manifests itself differently across regions and in countries and discriminated against groups vary by country, the formulation "most disadvantaged groups" is recommended, allowing for national specificity while making global monitoring possible. States would be required to identify the specific groups that will be monitored at the global level through a participatory process.[38] Groups that might be chosen for monitoring include those defined by ethnicity, race, religion, language, or spatially defined groups such as slum dwellers, residents of specific geographic areas, or other nationally tailored groupings.

[38] UNICEF and WHO Joint Monitoring Programme, Report of the first Consultation, p. 3 (see footnote 7 above).

66. While the situation of groups that form a relatively large part of the population can be monitored through the standard survey data used by the Joint Monitoring Programme, this is not always possible for small population groups since oversampling, to the degree necessary to detect discrimination or inequality, is not feasible. For small groups, special studies are needed that should be guided by a standard procedure manual containing guidelines for conducting special studies of small marginalized groups.

E. Address individual-related inequalities relevant in every country

67. Evidence shows that women and girls, older people, people with chronic illnesses and persons with disabilities often face particular barriers in accessing water and sanitation, and that these barriers are experienced both within the household and when accessing community and public facilities. Global monitoring data have demonstrated that women and girls shoulder the burden of collecting household water, restricting their time for other activities, including education and work. Moreover, when households share sanitation facilities, women and girls may be required by social norms concerning privacy to avoid using the facilities except during hours of darkness, when their personal safety may be at increased risk. When sanitation and water facilities are not designed with them in mind, older persons and those with physical access constraints, including disabilities may face obstacles to accessing and using these facilities. Such discrimination based on sex/gender, age, disability, and health status occurs across the globe and in all strata of society.

68. Human rights law requires that effective measures be taken to end discriminatory impacts based on sex/gender, disability, age and health status in all fields. States are obliged to take measures to enhance equality in all places where its impacts are felt, both public and private spheres. While human rights law does not require governments to directly provide water or to build sanitation facilities wherever they are lacking, it does oblige governments to take steps to ensure that everyone can access these rights without discrimination. It also requires States to provide basic services where individuals cannot access what they need, such as in displacement camps. In government-run institutions, such as primary schools, hospitals or places of detention, the direct provision of services will usually be required.

69. Much has been learned through questions in household surveys about intrahousehold inequalities related to water collection. Much less is known about such inequalities concerning sanitation and hygiene, and about water, sanitation and hygiene-related household inequalities concerning age and disability. Given that not all households share resources and assets equally among their members and that some may be relatively more privileged than others, commanding more income and accessing greater consumption opportunities, it is imperative to accurately disaggregate intrahousehold data regarding household resources such as water and sanitation. There is evidence that intrahousehold inequality and poverty may disproportionately affect women, persons with disabilities, children and older persons. Targets and indicators should be phrased to require monitoring of intrahousehold inequalities. They should shine a powerful light on areas that need change and ensure that monitoring is in line with the human rights imperative to overcome inequalities wherever they occur.

70. Currently, household surveys do not collect information about intrahousehold differences in access such as by sex, age, or disability. However, they could be amended to capture this dimension by focusing on the actual use of water, sanitation and hygiene by all individuals within a household which would allow for such monitoring. The Special Rapporteur's experience notes that interviewing women, children or persons with disabilities often draws a different picture of actual use of existing facilities, as well as of the existing barriers that explain lack of use.

71. In addition, it would be extremely valuable to monitor how gender, age, and disability-related inequalities manifest themselves in relation to water, sanitation, and hygiene in public facilities such as schools and health facilities where other human rights are also compromised. Indeed, such inequalities may be even more acute in public spaces, making the collection of data about equity and equality variables especially important in these contexts.

72. While household surveys do not capture information on settings beyond the household, other data sources include this type of information. Information about water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools and health-care facilities appears to be the most widely available, and an emphasis on improving monitoring in such settings is closely tied to the human rights obligations that States have concerning education and health. Data concerning water, sanitation and hygiene access in workplaces should be sought and used whenever possible. Finally, water, sanitation and hygiene data should also be gathered from prisons and other detention centres, since detainees often suffer deprivations of water and sanitation, even resulting in inhuman or degrading treatment. Although such data are not reliably captured around the world, global monitoring bodies should actively seek this information, since State obligations to both provide and monitor such access are at their apex in contexts where they are depriving individuals of their liberty.

73. One particular area where individual inequalities and the lack of attention to the needs of women and girls is starkly apparent is menstrual hygiene management. Menstruation is a taboo topic. In this context, women and girls are forced into furtive practices and obliged to hide their hygiene practices and limit their movements during menstruation. Although there is a dearth of research in this area, several studies demonstrate that adolescent girls often face significant restrictions during and associated with their menses.[39] Girls may be taken out of school or workplaces or choose not to attend because there are no facilities for hygienically managing menstruation in sanitation facilities.[40]

74. Because menstrual hygiene management has such a strong impact on gender equality, it could be used as a proxy for information about discrimination against women and girls in sanitation and hygiene. Targets and indicators should be crafted to capture the ability of all women and adolescent girls to manage menstruation

[39] For further discussion, see Archana Patkar's contributions to the meeting report of the Joint Monitoring Programme Working Group on Equality and Non-Discrimination, available from http://www.wssinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/resources/Lisbon-Meeting-Report-FINAL.pdf.

[40] Ibid; see also Marni Sommer, "Utilizing participatory and quantitative methods for effective menstrual-hygiene management related policy and planning", paper prepared for the UNICEF-Graduate Program in International Affairs Conference on Adolescent Girls, New York, 24-26 April 2010, available from http://www.wsscc.org/sites/default/files/publications/marnisommer_participatoryquantativemethodsmhmpolicyplanning_2010.pdf.

hygienically and with dignity, supported by amending the relevant household surveys explicitly asking about adequate menstrual hygiene management.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

75. **The present report concludes that there is much to be gained by redefining progress for a post-2015 development framework, and explicitly including equality, non-discrimination and equity at its foundations. The human right to water and sanitation offers exemplary illustrations of the significance of these principles. The report underlines the need for enhanced data collection and monitoring to determine who is excluded, and calls for incentives to reduce inequalities and focus on the most disadvantaged. Current limitations in measurements or data collection should not deter the international community from committing to a robust set of goals, targets and indicators to reduce the gaps in access to water and sanitation for all. On the contrary, one of the Millennium Development Goals most significant blind spots has been precisely their indifference to inequalities.**

76. **Against this background, the Special Rapporteur recommends the following:**

(a) **General recommendations on equality, non-discrimination and equity:**

(i) **The human rights principles of equality and non-discrimination, paired with equity, must be central to the post-2015 global development agenda. This should be ensured through two mutually reinforcing approaches: by creating a stand-alone equality goal; and by ensuring that other goals, targets, and indicators are explicitly designed to reveal who is left behind and to provide incentives for progress towards ensuring access for the most disadvantaged;**

(ii) **The stand-alone goal on equality must reach beyond income inequalities to address the root causes of exclusion and deprivation and reflect the cross-cutting nature of equality. It should consist of an overall goal on achieving equality accompanied by targets for different sectors for reducing inequalities;**

(iii) **Goals, targets and indicators must be framed in a way to reduce inequalities and target the most disadvantaged. They must not focus solely on aggregate progress and outcomes;**

(iv) **The future framework should aim at reducing inequality gaps while focusing on the most economically and socially deprived members of society. The equity approach should not be used alone; rather it should be complemented with the principles of non-discrimination and equality. Embracing both approaches provides an important political foothold by emphasizing areas where human rights law has traditionally been less robust — especially in relation to wealth inequities and global disparities — while also underlining the legal obligation to eliminate discrimination;**

(b) Recommendations regarding goals, targets and indicators for water, sanitation and hygiene:

(i) The post-2015 development agenda should incorporate a stand-alone goal on water, sanitation and hygiene, to ensure that universal access to these services will be treated as a vital feature of social and economic development, on equal footing with health or education. Water, sanitation and hygiene should not be neglected in the global priority-setting for development goals;

(ii) A goal on universal access must be complemented with a call for the reduction of inequalities. One of the targets should consist in reducing the gap between the rate of coverage in terms of access to water, sanitation and hygiene in the best-off or dominant groups to that of the worst-off or minority groups;

(iii) Future goals, targets and indicators on water, sanitation and hygiene must:

a. Focus on progressive realization towards good quality, and sustainable water and sanitation for all, without discrimination;

b. Address geographic inequalities, such as those experienced by communities in remote rural areas and slums;

c. Tackle inequities and disparities, shedding light and providing guidance for policymaking to benefit the poorest of the poor;

d. Address group-related inequalities that vary across countries, such as those based on ethnicity, race, nationality, language and religion;

e. Address the impacts of individual-related inequalities, present in every country of the globe, such as those based on sex/gender, age, and disability — as they are experienced in the public and private spheres;

f. Address the need for adequate menstrual hygiene management for women and girls;

(c) Recommendations regarding data sources and methodology:

(i) The Special Rapporteur calls for pushing the boundaries of what is currently perceived as measurable in order to better identify and monitor inequalities;

(ii) Disaggregation of data is a powerful tool for the collection of detailed and accurate information, but it does not automatically result in the reduction of inequalities. Incentives to reduce inequalities and target the most disadvantaged must be incorporated in the definition of goals, targets and indicators;

(iii) Monitoring initiatives at the global or regional levels should use the equity and equality-related variables included in the current data sets more widely as well as explore ways to supplement household survey data with additional sources;

(iv) Disaggregation between rural and urban should be maintained, as called for in the current monitoring framework, while improving the methodology to capture the special situations of people living in slums;

(v) Monitoring bodies at the regional and global levels should engage in pilot testing of possible uses of emerging data sources based on the use of new technologies;

(vi) The monitoring of gender, age, and disability-related inequalities in public facilities such as schools and health facilities should be enhanced;

(vii) Targets and indicators should be crafted to ensure that women and adolescent girls can manage menstruation hygienically and with dignity, including by specific questions in relevant household surveys about adequate menstrual hygiene management.